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LETTER DATED 10 APRIL 1996 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE LIBYAN ARAB JAMAHIRIYA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to transmit to you herewith a copy of an article published by the newspaper Al-Sharq al-Awsat in its issue No. 6343 on Wednesday, 10 April 1996 (annex I). It speaks of a documentary to be shown on Channel 4 television in London that points an accusing finger at United States intelligence as having been responsible for the 1984 killing of British policewoman Yvonne Fletcher in front of the Libyan embassy in London during a hostile demonstration organized and supervised by the British authorities. It is this incident that led to the severance of diplomatic relations between the two countries. I am also transmitting to you herewith a copy of an article on the same subject published by the British newspaper The Guardian on 9 April 1996 (annex II).

These facts continue the process of revealing that the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya is innocent of the charges falsely made against it and contrived by United States intelligence, beginning with the accusation of terrorism. They include the charge of having bombed a West Berlin nightclub in 1986 that was used by former President Reagan as the pretext for his brutal nighttime attack on peaceable Libyan cities in which some dozens of children, women and old people were killed, among them Hana' Muammar Qaddafi, the adopted daughter of the Leader of the Revolution. Most regrettably, the Security Council failed to condemn this attack owing to the arbitrary use of the veto by the aggressor.

In connection with the charge of having bombed an American aircraft suddenly made against two Libyan nationals at the end of 1991, more than three years after the incident had taken place, the Security Council was used to impose an aerial embargo and various economic sanctions on the Libyan Arab people on the basis of a mere allegation for which no evidence was produced. The rejection of all proposals for the peaceful resolution of the dispute, in particular of the Jamahiriya's request that the suspects be tried in a neutral country, even before Scottish judges and under Scots law, only indicates that the charge was false from the outset. A fair and impartial trial would reveal that to the entire world, just as it would reveal that many of the United States accusations against the Jamahiriya are false. The most recent revelation is

that published today concerning the incident in which the British policewoman was killed. The facts show that she was killed by a bullet fired by a United States intelligence agent in order to put a strain on relations between the Jamahiriya and the United Kingdom and enlist the latter in the secret schemes of the United States against the Jamahiriya. After this incident, the United Kingdom did participate and help in the brutal attack on Libyan cities in 1986.

Your acquaintance with these facts reinforces the statements we have previously made in our defence against the charges levelled against the two Libyan nationals in connection with the Lockerbie case. We are certain that they are innocent. It was unjust of the Security Council to allow itself to be carried away by United States allegations unsupported by evidence and to impose harsh sanctions on the people of the Jamahiriya. Much information has nevertheless come to light to indicate that the two Libyan nationals were innocent of this charge and that it is a fabrication of United States intelligence. This explains the intransigence of the United States and its rejection of the solutions proposed by the Jamahiriya, most recently the acceptance by the Jamahiriya of the proposal of the League of Arab States that the suspects in the case should be tried at the seat of the International Court of Justice at The Hague before Scottish judges and under Scots law. This suggestion has received the support of international and regional organizations because it takes account of the interests of all the parties and brings an end to the suffering both of the victims' families and of the Libyan Arab people.

We hope that this new information will prompt the Security Council to review its resolutions against the Jamahiriya, to lift the sanctions unjustly imposed on the country and to order that the proposal of the League of Arab States be accepted and implemented under United Nations auspices.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annexes circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Mohamed A. AZWAI
Permanent Representative

Annex I

Article from the newspaper Al-Sharq al-Awsat
for Wednesday, 10 April 1996

In a Television Programme to Be Shown in London Today:

UNITED STATES ACCUSED OF KILLING THE BRITISH POLICEWOMAN
IN FRONT OF THE LIBYAN EMBASSY

London: from Muhammad al-Shafi'i

This evening British television is to show a documentary that is likely to be controversial on the killing of British policewoman Yvonne Fletcher in front of the Libyan embassy building on 17 April 1984. The programme points an accusing finger at United States intelligence in the affair of the killing of Constable Fletcher and says that the fatal bullet was fired from the sixth floor of a building in St. James's Square and not from the first floor of the Libyan embassy.

The programme bases itself on the contradiction between a computer-assisted analysis of the sound of the 11 shots fired in front of the embassy building that day in the direction of a demonstration by the Libyan opposition and the fact that criminal investigators found 12 spent rounds in the square after the incident. The programme also presents the testimony of a senior expert in forensic medicine who examined Fletcher's body and who states that the angle of entry of the bullet indicates that it came from a height and not from inside the Libyan embassy.

The killing of Constable Fletcher during a demonstration by the Libyan opposition in St. James's Square in central London led to the expulsion of 22 diplomats after a 10-day seige of the Libyan embassy and to the severance of diplomatic relations between the two countries.

Reached by telephone by Al-Sharq al-Awsat, a spokesman for Channel 4 said that the documentary presented new scientific evidence that revealed that the bullet that killed Constable Fletcher had not come from inside the Libyan embassy but from a high building in the centre of the square.

He indicated that the programme had taken several months to prepare and included a sound recording and a computer analysis of the shots fired at the time of the incident. There had been 11 such shots, while criminal investigators had found 12 spent rounds in the square.

The programme, which is part of the "Dispatches" series and is to be shown on Channel 4 this evening, also includes testimony by Hugh Thomas, a former senior forensic surgeon in Northern Ireland. On the basis of the angle of entry of the bullet into the body of Yvonne Fletcher, who was standing erect directly in front of the Libyan embassy building, he states that it came from a greater height and not from the first floor of the Libyan embassy.

The spokesman for Channel 4 said that the most up-to-date electronic techniques had been used to reconstruct the scene of the incident on 17 April 1984 in St. James's Square in order to ascertain what had happened in front of the Libyan embassy building on that day.

Also reached by telephone by Al-Sharq al-Awsat, a spokesman for Scotland Yard said that he could not comment on the programme before seeing it and abstracting whatever new evidence it presented that might lead to the identification of the perpetrator, who had yet to be brought to justice. He added that they would make their move after the programme if there was actual new evidence that helped to identify the killer of Constable Yvonne Fletcher.

The new evidence to be presented today by the documentary indicates that Constable Fletcher was killed by a bullet that came from the sixth floor of a building in the same square, a floor that was occupied by officers of United States security agencies. It is asserted that the incident took place in order to ensure that British efforts would support the United States before an air strike was directed against Libya using British airfields in April 1986. The programme also indicates that, before the incident, British intelligence had advance information that members of the Libyan opposition were to be fired on from inside the Libyan embassy while they were demonstrating.

Yvonne Fletcher, shot dead policing demonstration

Documentary says second gunman could have been behind killing in 1984 which hardened British attitude to Gaddafi

The memorial to WPC Fletcher placed in St James's Square. Her family feels the whole truth has not emerged

'US involved' in death of WPC at Libyan embassy

Duncan Campbell and Richard Norton-Taylor

YVONNE Fletcher, the policewoman shot dead during a demonstration outside the Libyan Embassy more than 10 years ago, could have been killed by a member of the American intelligence services to enlist British support against Libya, according to a documentary to be shown tomorrow.

The programme claims that a second gunman could have been involved in the killing, and suggests many key facts in the case have been covered up.

WPC Fletcher was on duty outside the Libyan Embassy in St James's Square, central London, in April 1984 when shots were fired at anti-Gaddafi demonstrators. At the time it was believed that all the shots had been fired from the first floor of the Embassy building.

No one was charged with the murder. The 22 Embassy officials were allowed to leave the building 10 days after the shooting, were escorted to Heathrow airport and flew back to a heroes' welcome in Tripoli.

Members of Ms Fletcher's family have always felt that the whole truth has not emerged. Her mother, Queenie Fletcher, said on the tenth anniversary of her daughter's death: "I think the Government probably knew more about that demonstration than anyone admits, they knew that there was something different about it but the message wasn't passed on. It should have been policed differently and constables like Yvonne should not have been there."

A Dispatches documentary to be shown on Channel 4 tomorrow suggests that Yvonne Fletcher's death could have been a cynical murder in order to bring the British into line as part of the United States's campaign against Libya. When the US bombed Tripoli in an unsuccessful attempt to kill Gaddafi in April 1986, it was vital that they had the use of British airbases to launch their attacks.

The programme casts doubt on the original finding that WPC Fletcher must have been shot from a first floor window of the embassy. It suggests, with the backing of Hugh Thomas — a controversial former army surgeon — that the trajectory of the bullet that killed her indicates that she was shot from a much greater height.

It is also claimed that the security services were aware of the fact that Colonel Gaddafi had told those in the embassy that they could respond to the protest demonstration by Libyan dissidents by opening fire on them. It was clear, it is suggested, that on the day WPC Fletcher was killed there was intelligence that a shooting should take place.

The programme argues that the fatal shot could have come from a handgun fired from the sixth floor of another building in the square which had recently been used by intelligence officers. American security analysts say that the shooting drastically altered the British attitude to Gaddafi which, until then, had been much more relaxed than that within the Reagan administration.

Conservative MP Teddy Taylor, who has taken an interest in the case for a number of years, says in the programme that attempts to get the truth of what exactly happened that day have been rebuffed. "What we get back all the time is waffle," he says.

The programme says a post-mortem report on Ms Fletcher was changed after the inquest and a Cabinet Office report on the incident was never published.

The Guardian
Tuesday, 9 April 1996
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